

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

This application is believed to be in condition for allowance because the claims are believed to be non-obvious and patentable over the cited references. The following paragraphs provide the justification for this belief. In view of the following reasoning for allowance, the Applicant hereby respectfully requests further examination and reconsideration of the subject patent application.

1.0 Decision on Appeal Dated February 15, 2005:

In the Decision on Appeal dated February 15, 2005, the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences held, in part, that the rejection of claims 76, 92, and 93 is reversed.

In response, Applicants have provided new claims 95-100 by way of the foregoing amendment. New claim 100 includes the limitations of original claim 75, in their entirety, in combination with the of original claim 76 in their entirety. In other words, claim 100 is simply a combination of original claims 75 and 76. Similarly, new claims 96-100 repeat the limitations of original claims 77, 78, 79, 80, and 89, respectively.

Consequently, as the rejection of claim 76 was reversed by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, new claim 95, being composed of original claims 75 and 76, is allowable over the cited prior art references (Dumben, U.S. Patent No. 1,780,872, and Hunter, U.S. Patent No. 4,966,340). Consequently, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 95-100 at the earliest opportunity.

With respect to claims 92-94, claim 92 is an independent claim. As the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences has reversed the rejection of this claim, claims 92-94 are allowable over the cited prior art references (Dumben, U.S. Patent No. 1,780,872, and Hunter, U.S. Patent No. 4,966,340). Consequently, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 92-94 at the earliest opportunity.

2.0 Objection to Claims 78-80, 83-85, and 94:

In the prior Office Action in this case, the Examiner indicated that claims 78-80, 83-85 and 94 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response, Applicants have amended independent claim 75 to include the limitations of dependent claim 78 and intervening dependent claim 77. As the Examiner has indicated that claim 78, which depends from dependent claim 77 would be allowable, Applicants respectfully suggest that independent claim 75 is now allowable, as it includes the allowable limitations of claims 77 and 78. Original claims 77 and 78 have now been cancelled. Note that claim 79 has been amended to reflect a new dependency as a result of the amendment to claim 75, and the cancellation of claims 77 and 78.

Therefore, because claim 75, as amended, now includes subject matter indicated by the Examiner to be allowable, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection of claims 75-76, 81-82, and 86-91 in view of the allowability of claim 75.

Further, because claim 75, as amended, now includes subject matter indicated by the Examiner to be allowable, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Examiner's objection to claims 79, 80, and 83-85 which depend from independent claim 75.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 75-76, and 79-100 are in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of claims 75, 81-82, and 86-91, and objection to claims 79, 80, and 83-85. The rejections of claims 76 and 92-93 have already been vacated by decision of the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences. Consequently, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. Additionally, in an effort to further the prosecution of the subject application, the Applicant kindly invites the Examiner to telephone the Applicant's attorney at (805) 278-8855 if the Examiner has any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,



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